

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
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R 031440Z MAR 76
FM AMEMBASSY AMMAN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7165

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 AMMAN 1205

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FOR NEA ASST SECRETARY AND COORDINATOR FOR
NARCOTICS SHELDON VANCE FROM AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: ORG NARC, JO, US
SUBJECT: DEA PROFILE IN JORDAN

1. THIS SEEMS A GOOD TIME TO EXPRESS MY CONCERN
OVER A MATTER INVOLVING THE CURRENT DEA PROGRAM
HERE WHICH STRIKES AT BOTH THE EFFICIENT FUNCTIONING
OF THIS MISSION AND OUR BILATERAL RELATIONS WITH THE
JORDANIANS. I REFER TO WHAT APPEARS TO BE A GRADUAL
BUT STEADY EXPANSION IN THE AMMAN-RELATED ACTIVITIES
OF THE DEA, BOTH WITH RESPECT TO PLANS ORIGINATING
IN WASHINGTON, AND ON THE PART OF DEA'S ANKARA
FIELD OFFICE FOR THE MIDDLE EAST. SINCE I HAVE LONG
FAVORED A POLICY OF LIMITING TO THE DEGREE POSSIBLE
AMERICAN VISIBILITY IN AMMAN, BOTH IN TERMS OF
PERSONNEL AND PROGRAMS, I WOULD LIKE BRIEFLY TO
REVIEW THE NARCOTICS-ENFORCEMENT PROGRAM IN AMMAN
AND ALSO DEA'S ROLE IN IT, WITH AN EYE TO AVOIDING
POSSIBLE PROBLEMS INHERENT IN A CONSPICUOUS EMBASSY
PRESENCE HERE AND A PROGRAM GROWN OUT OF ALL PROPOR-
TION TO WHAT AMMAN HAS TO OFFER, MERELY BECAUSE
WE HAVE BEEN SHUT DOWN IN BEIRUT.

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2. RESPONSIBILITY FOR ENFORCEMENT OF THE LOCAL

NARCOTICS LAWS FALLS ON THE JORDANIAN NARCOTICS ENFORCEMENT BUREAU, A DIVISION OF THE PARAMILITARY PUBLIC SECURITY FORCES. THE BUREAU IS HAEDED BY LT COL YUSEF GHARAYBEH, WHO IS ALSO DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF THE GENERAL INTELLIGENCE DIRECTORATE. DEA'S RESPONSIBILITIES TOWARD THIS UNIT, FORMERLY EXERCISED FROM BEIRUT BUT RECENTLY TRANSFERRED TO ANKARA, INVOLVE OPERATIONS, TRAINING, AND LIAISON, THE LATTER BEING PERFORMED ON A REGULAR BASIS BY THE EMBASSY'S POLITICAL SECTION.(I HAVE PLACED AN ABSOLUTE BAN ANY DEA UNILATERAL OPERATIONS.) OPERATIONS AND TRAINING ARE HANDLED ON A TDY BASIS BY DEA SPECIAL AGENTS OUT OF ANKARA AND WASHINGTON.

3. ALTHOUGH THIS ARRANGEMENT HAS PROVEN SATISFACTORY IN THE PAST, SEVERAL RECENT DEVELOPMENTS INDICATE THAT DEA IS CONSIDERING EXPANDING ITS ACTIVITIES IN AMMAN, EVEN TO THE POINT OF RECOMMENDING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A PERMANENT REGIONAL OFFICE HERE. BEFORE REVIEWING THE REASONS WHY I BELIEVE THAT THE AGENCY'S RESPONSIBILITIES AS DESCRIBED ABOVE DO NOT MERIT SUCH AN EXPANSION, I WILL CITE SEVERAL INDICATIONS OF RENEWED DEA INTEREST IN AMMAN:

A) DURING THE PAST THREE MONTHS, WE HAVE NOTICED A MARKED INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF TDY NARCOTICS-RELATED VISITORS TO AMMAN; THEY HAVE NOW PROPOSED A REGULAR TDY VISIT HERE SEVEN TO TEN DAYS EVERY MONTH. VISITS APPEAR TO OCCUR ON A SOMEWHAT HAPHAZARD BASIS: AGENTS RARELY GIVE THE EMBASSY MORE THAN 48-72 HOURS' NOTICE, NOR DO THEY SPECIFY THE LENGTH OF TIME THEY PLAN TO STAY, EVEN UPON ARRIVAL. SUCH VISITS OFTEN LAST MORE THAN A WEEK AND INEVITABLY THE EMBASSY CANNOT MONITOR ALL THE CONTACTS WITH THE JNA THAT OCCUR DURING THEM.

B) THERE ARE SIGNS THAT AMMAN IS BEING DEVELOPED BY SALAMI TACTICS AS THE DE FACTO CENTER OF A NARCOTICS-INTELLIGENCE GATHERING OPERATION FOR AT LEAST SYRIA AND PERHAPS THE ENTIRE MIDDLE EAST, A FUNCTION FORMERLY PERFORMED BY BEIRUT, A MISSION
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WHICH DEA AGENTS THEMSELVES ADMIT IS NOT VALID GIVEN JNA'S CURRENT LACK OF CAPABILITY AND THE PAUCITY OF SUCH INTELLIGENCE HERE.

C) TDY AGENTS HAVE ARRANGED TO FUND THE RENTAL HERE OF A SAFE HOUSE, WHICH I HAVE AGREED TO ON THE STRICT CONDITION THAT IT BE CONTROLLED BY THE JORDANIAN NARCOTICS BUREAU FOR INFORMANT CONTACT, AND THAT DEA MAINTAIN NO UNILATERAL OPERATIONS.

D) DEA WISHES TO PROMOTE THE VISIT (WHICH I DID NOT APPROVE) OF THEIR REGIONAL CHIEF IN CONNECTION WITH A TRAINING COURSE THEY ARE RUNNING THIS MONTH, A VISIT WHICH IT IS CLEAR TO US SERVED NO OTHER PURPOSE BUT TO LEVY FURTHER PRESSURE FOR A DEA EXPANSION.

4. MY CONCERN OVER THESE DEVELOPMENTS,, IN ADDITION TO A GENERAL RELUCTANCE TO PRESIDE OVER ANY INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF OFFICIAL AMERICANS IN JORDAN, STEMS FROM THE FOLLOWING CONSIDERATIONS:

A) COL YUSEF GHARAYBEH'S POSITION AS CHIEF OF A UNIT WHICH HIS SUPERIORS PREFER TO REGARD WITH BENIGN NEGLECT PLACES HIM IN AN EXPOSED AND SENSITIVE POSITION, WHICH STRONG DEA/EMBASSY PROSELYTIZING COULD WELL WEAKEN. GHARAYBEH IS A CAPABLE OFFICER WHO IS ATTEMPTING TO WALK A TIGHTROPE BETWEEN CONTRACTUAL DUTIES WITH US FOR A STRONG NARCOTICS UNIT, AND HIGH-LEVEL SUGGESTIONS FROM HIS POLICE SUPERIOR (PARTLY OUT OF JEALOUSY OVER OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH HIM) THAT HE BIDE HIS TIME. HIS SUPERIORS, FOR EXAMPLE, PARTICULARLY MAJ GEN ANWAR MOHAMMAD, THE HEAD OF THE PUBLIC SECURITY FORCES, HAVE BACKED OFF FROM THEIR INITIAL POSITION OF STRONG ADVOCACY OF AN AGGRESSIVE NARCOTICS PROGRAM. THERE SEEMS TO BE LITTLE CHANCE THAT THE LOCAL NARCOTICS FORCE, PRESENTLY CONSISTED AT 24 MEN, WILL ATTAIN ITS PLANNED COMPLEMENT OF 82 IN ANY FORESEEABLE FUTURE, AND A CONCENTRATED EMBASSY PURSUIT OF THIS GOAL WILL PLACE COL GHARAYBEH, WHOM WE PREFER TO SEE REMAIN, IN AN UNTENABLE POSITION. INCIDENTALLY GHARAYBEH AND HIS MEN ARE BEGINNING TO SHOW SOME IRRITATION OVER THE EXTRA LOAD BEING PLACED ON THEM

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TO RECEIVE SUCH FREQUENT AND EXTENDED TDY'S FROM DEA (WITH THE EXCEPTION OF THE TRAINING COURSE).

B) I DO NOT BELIEVE THE "TAKE" IN JORDAN, EITHER IN PHYSICAL BULK OF SEIZED NARCOTICS OR IN USEFUL INTELLIGENCE, MERITS ANYTHING RESEMBLING A PERMANENT PRESENCE HERE. THUS FAR, NO ONE IN DEA HAS BEEN ABLE TO SHOW ANYTHING TO DISPUTE THIS JUDGMENT.

C) RECENTLY, THE SAME DEA AGENTS HAVE STARTED TO SERVICE BOTH TEL AVIV AND THE ARAB COUNTRIES, FREQUENTLY CROSSING THE KING HUSSEIN BRIDGE BETWEEN HERE AND JERUSALEM AND THUS MEETING WITH BOTH JORDANIAN AND ISRAELI NARCOTICS BUREAUS. DEA IN TEL AVIV RECENTLY REQUESTED THAT THE JORDANIANS SUPPLY THE ISRAELIS, THROUGH US, INFORMA-

TION RELATING TO HASHISH MOVEMENTS, AND I HAD TO
STOP A PROPOSAL FOR DEA FROM THE LOCAL AGENT TO

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ACTION SS-25

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FM AMEMBASSY AMMAN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7166

S E C R E T SECTION 2 OF 2 AMMAN 1205

STADIS////////////////////////////////

EXDIS

FOR NEA ASST SECRETARY AND COORDINATOR FOR
NARCOTICS SHELDON VANCE FROM AMBASSADOR

SET DEA UP AS A FORMAL INTERMEDIARY BETWEEN THE
JORDANIAN AND ISRAELI NARCOTICS BUREAUS. (FIND IT
HARD TO BELIEVE THAT THE HEAVILY-POLICED AND FORTIFIED
BORDER AND THE THOROUGH INSPECTION OF TRANSITING
CARGOES TO PROTECT AGAINST TERRORIST ACTIVITIES MAKE
THE JORDAN-ISRAELI ROUTE EXACTLY A VULNERABLE TARGET
FOR NARCOTICS TRAFFICKING). THE POSSIBLE COMPLICATIONS
IN SUCH A CHARGED POLITICAL ATMOSPHERE ARISING FROM
THE SHARING OF AGENTS BETWEEN ISRAEL AND THE ARAB
COUNTRIES, AND OF SHARING INTELLIGENCE ON AN ATTRIBUTALBE
BASIS, ARE OBVIOUS. I HAVE PLACED AN ABSOLUTE BAN HERE
ON TRAVEL OF DEA AGENTS BETWEEN JORDAN AND ISRAEL
AND AM REQUESTING THAT DEA HAVE SEPARATE AGENTS
HANDLING ISRAELI FROM THOSE HANDLING JORDANIAN NAR-
COTICS MATTERS.

D) FINALLY, ONE HAS THE IMPRESSION THAT
GREATER ATTENTION HAS LATELY BEEN GIVEN TO AMMAN NOT
FOR THE INTRINSIC IN-COUNTRY NARCOTICS SITUATION, WHICH
HAS REMAINED ABOUT THE SAME SINCE THE TWO YEARS I
HAVE BEEN HERE, BUT AS A DE FACTO REGIONAL NARCOTICS
CENTER, PRIMARILY BECAUSE OTHER MIDDLE EAST POSTS

WHERE THEY HAVE AGENTS (BEIRUT, ANKARA) ARE
EXPERIENCING OPERATION DIFFICULTIES, OR BECAUSE OF
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DEA'S GENERAL INTEREST IN EXPANSION IN THE AREA.
E) WE HAVE SUFFICIENT SUSPICIONS LOCALLY CONCERNING U.S. CLANDESTINE ACTIVITIES THAT I DO NOT WANT TO RISK RAISING OUR PROFILE IN THAT REGARD. I BELIEVE A HEAVY DEA TDY OR PERMANENT PRESENCE HERE COULD WELL BE MISCONSTRUED AS HAVING SOME KIND OF POLITICAL INTELLIGENCE CHARACTER. OUR RELATIONS WITH JORDAN ARE SUFFICIENTLY FLUID ALREADY NOT TO ADD ANOTHER POTENTIAL COMPLICATION.

5. IN CONCLUSION, I WANT TO INFORM YOU THAT I AM
TAKING THE FOLLOWING STEPS:

A) DEA IS TO PROVIDE FOR MY REVIEW AND APPROVAL, A PLAN FOR ALL OF OUR PROPOSED ACTIVITIES IN JORDAN FOR THE COMING 12 MONTHS BASED ON THE MINIMUM REQUIRED PRESENCE HERE. THESE SHOULD INCLUDE A PROPOSED SCHEDULE OF VISITS OF MINIMUM FREQUENCY AND DURATION. EXCEPT IN EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES, I WILL APPROVE NO FURTHER VISITS HERE AFTER THE CURRENT TRAINING EXERCISE IS TERMINATED (QPRIL 10) UNTIL THAT REPORT IS COMPLETED.
B) NO PERMANENT DEA AGENT IS TO BE ASSIGNED TO JORDAN. ALL TDY VISITS ARE TO BE FORMALLY APPROVED IN ADVANCE BY THE EMBASSY. DEA AGENTS ARE TO HAVE NO LONG-DISTANCE TELEPHONE CONVERSATIONS WITH JORDANIAN NARCOTICS ELEMENTS; ALL COMMUNICATIONS ARE TO BE WRITTEN AND SENT THROUGH THE EMBASSY NARCOTICS COORDINATOR.
C) THE FIRM PROHIBITION ON THE RUNNING OF UNILATERAL AGENTS BY DEA IS TO BE CONTINUED. FOLLOWING THE COMPLETION OF ITS TRAINING PROGRAM KN APRIL, DEA IS TO DROP ITS RENTAL OF A TDY RESTHOUSE SAFEHOUSE IT HAS BEEN USING DURING ITS CURRENT HEAVY TDY PERIOD.
D) NO DEA AGENT HAVING CONTACTS WITH JORDAN NARCOTICS IS TO HAVE ANY CONTACT WITH ISRAELI NARCOTICS ELEMENTS. ANY RELEVANT INTELLIGENCE GATHERED IN JORDAN IS TO BE PASSED TO EMBASSY TEL AVIV ON A NON-ATTRIBUTABLE BASIS.
E) ALL DEA MESSAGES WILL CONTINUE TO REQUIRE EMBASSY APPROVAL. (THIS HAS NOT BEEN A PROBLEM SO
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FAR).

F) EXCEPT IN URGENT CIRCUMSTANCES, THE SAME
DEA AGENT SHOULD GENERALLY PERFORM ALL TDY'S IN
JORDAN. I WOULD BE PLEASED IF MICHAEL HOLM CURRENTLY
HANDLING JORDAN COULD BE CONTINUED IN THAT ROLE.

6. I KNOW YOU REALIZE MY SUPPORT FOR OUR NARCOTICS
EFFORTS AROUND THE WORLD AND MY DESIRE TO SUPPORT A
WELL-CONCEIVED PROGRAM KN JORDAN. IN MY JUDGMENT
THE POTENTIAL PAY-OFF HERE IN NARCOTICS INTELLIGENCE
IS INSUFFICIENT AND THE DANGER OF RAISING OUR PROFILE
IS SIGNIFICANT ENOUGH TO JUSTIFY NOT CHANGING
OUR CURRENT SET-UP, WHEREBY AN EMBASSY OFFICER
MAINTAINS REGULAR CONTACT WITH THE JNA AND CALLS
FOR DEA ASSISTANCE WHEN REQUIRED . THE POLITICAL
STAKES ARE SIMPLY TOO HIGH IN JORDAN TO PERMIT THE
ESTABLISHMENT OF ANOTHER SYSTEM AT THIS TIME.
THE PROBLEM OF DESTROYING OUR PRESENT GOOD RELATIONS
WITH JNA ARE TOO IMPORTANT TO PERMIT THE
CONTINUED RUSHING THE GATES THAT HAS CHARACTERIZED
DEA ACTIVITIES HERE. I INTEND TO MAINTAIN
THIS POSITION WTH YOUR ASSISTANCE AND SUPPORT.

7. WE HAVE BRIEFED DEA SPECIAL AGENT HOLM ON THE GENERAL
CONTENTS OF THIS MESSAGE AND
HAVE NO OBJECTION TOYOUR BRIEFING DEA HEAD-
QUARTERS ON ITS CONTENTS.
PICKERING

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Message Attributes

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Draft Date: 03 MAR 1976
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